

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 /085 W

----- 027395

R 071120Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5549

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2861

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AG, SA, SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA NOTES

1. VISIT BY SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTRY PRICE SAUD TO ALGIERS, WHICH BEGAN DEC 1, HAS AROUSED NEW SPECULATION CONCERNING SAUDI MEDIATION EFFORT IN SAHRA. SAUD DELIVERED MESSAGE TO BOUMEDIENE DEC 1 AND THEN SET OFF ON HUNTING TRIP SIMILAR TO ONE HE MADE IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR. THIS TRIP HAS BEEN ON SCHEDULE FOR AT LEAST SIX WEEKS. (SAUDI AMBASSADOR WAS PREPARING FOR IT IN LATE OCTOBER.)

2. IN CONVERSATION DEC 5, FOREIGN MINISTRY ARAB NATIONS AFFAIRS CHIEF BENKACI WAS ADAMANT THAT NO MEDIATION WAS UNDERWAY. ALGERIANS PLEASED THAT SAUDIS INTERESTED IN PROBLEM, BENKACI SAID, BUT IT WOULD BE INACCURATE TO SAY THAT SAUDI ACTIVITY HAD REACHED STAGE THAT COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS MEDIATION. BENKACI LAUGHINGLY DISMISSED REPORT THAT ALGERIAN, MOROCCAN, AND MAURITANIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD MET IN EUROPE AS FIGMENT OF BRITISH NEWSPAPER THE GUARDIAN'S IMAGINATION. WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA'S DISAPPEARANCE FROM ALGERIAN PUBLIC SCENE SINCE PRINCE FAHD'S NOV 15-16 VISIT, BENKACI SAID THAT BOUTEFLIKA HAD BEEN OUKT OF
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ACTION BECAUSE OF "FRAGILE" HEALTH AND ADDED THAT HE

HIMSELF HAD NOT SEEN HIM SINCE THAT TIME. (WE
UNDERTSTAND FROM FRENCH EMBASSY, HOWEVER, THAT
BOUTEFLIKA WAS RECENTLY IN PARIS ON UNSPECIFIED
BUSINESS.)

3. ANTI-MOROCCAN MEDIA PROPAGANDA HAS DIMINISED IN
PAST SEVERAL DAYS ALTHOUGH, AS FBIS HAS BEEN REPORTING,
POLISARIO CONTINUES TO CLAIM MILITARY SUCCESSES IN
SAHARA.PARKER

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